

2012 - JCR Evaluation Form

SPECIES: Bison	PERIOD: 6/1/2012 - 5/31/2013
HERD: BI101 - JACKSON	
HUNT AREAS: 2, 888	PREPARED BY: DOUG BRIMEYER

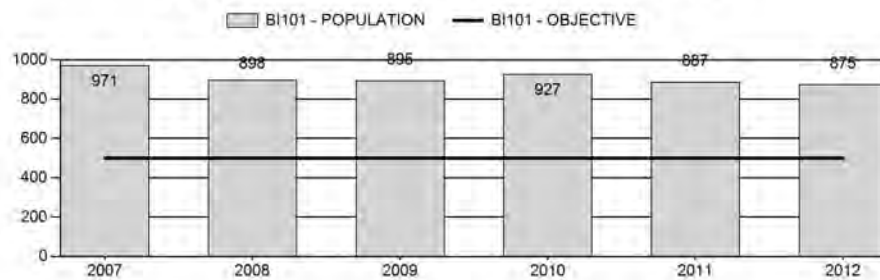
	<u>2007 - 2011 Average</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013 Proposed</u>
Population:	916	875	N/A
Harvest:	207	200	230
Hunters:	259	265	270
Hunter Success:	80%	75%	85%
Active Licenses:	259	265	270
Active License Percent:	80%	75%	85%
Recreation Days:	1,571	2,024	1,600
Days Per Animal:	7.6	10.1	7.0
Males per 100 Females	74	58	
Juveniles per 100 Females	48	42	

Population Objective:	500
Management Strategy:	Recreational
Percent population is above (+) or below (-) objective:	75%
Number of years population has been + or - objective in recent trend:	0
Model Date:	None

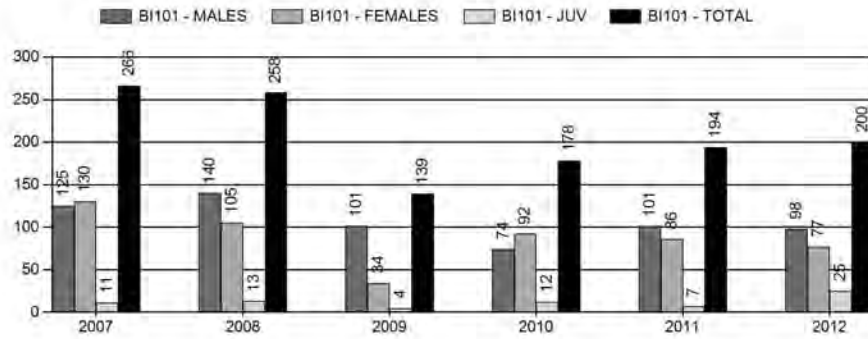
Proposed harvest rates (percent of pre-season estimate for each sex/age group):

	<u>JCR Year</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Females \geq 1 year old:	na%	na%
Males \geq 1 year old:	na%	na%
Juveniles (< 1 year old):	na%	na%
Total:	na%	na%
Proposed change in post-season population:	na%	na%

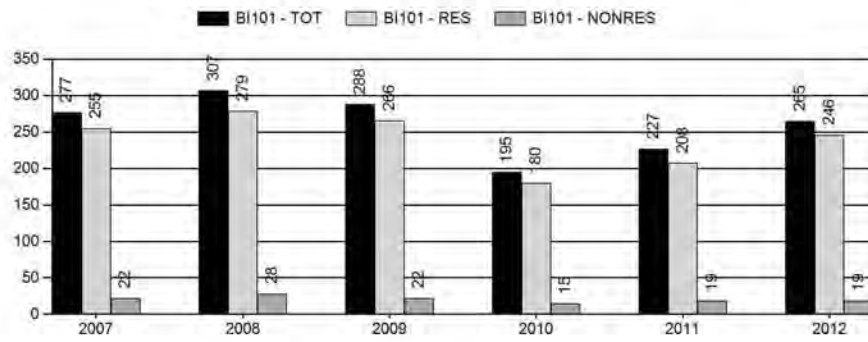
Population Size - Postseason



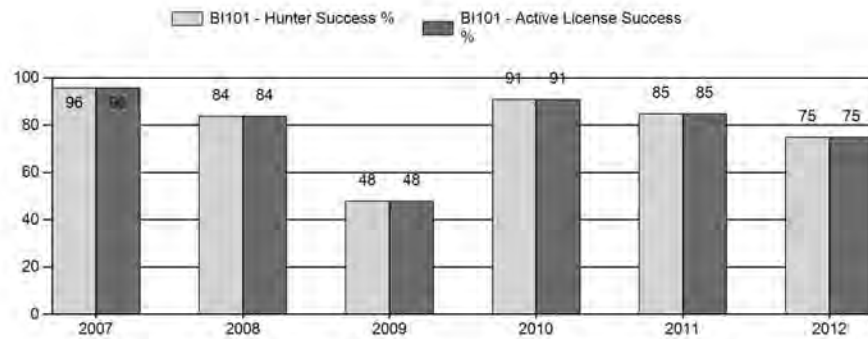
Harvest



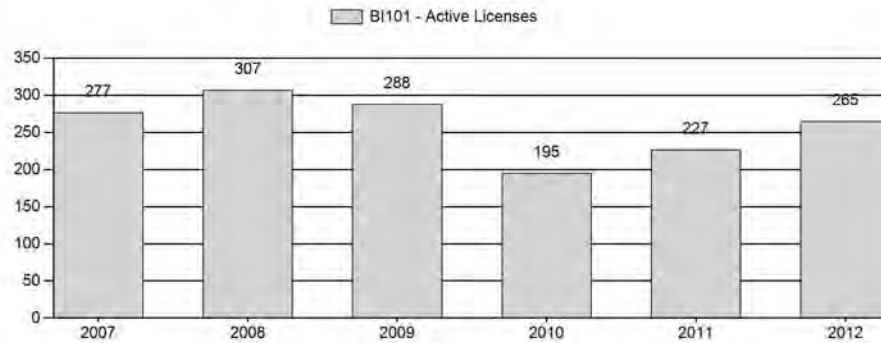
Number of Hunters



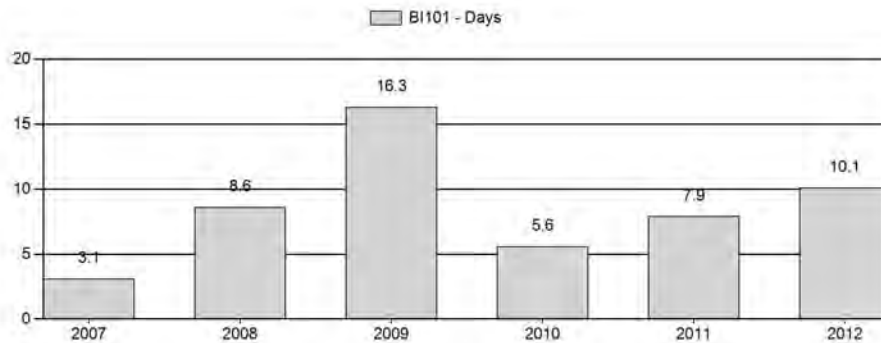
Harvest Success



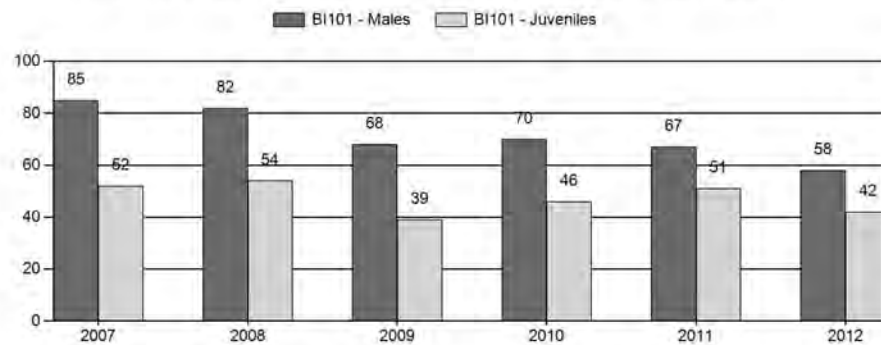
Active Licenses



Days per Animal Harvested



Postseason Animals per 100 Females



2007 - 2012 Postseason Classification Summary

for Bison Herd BI101 - JACKSON

Year	Post Pop	MALES				FEMALES		JUVENILES		Tot CIs	Cls Obj	Males to 100 Females				Young to		
		Ylg	Adult	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%			Ylg	Adult	Total	Conf Int	100 Fem	Conf Int	100 Adult
2007	971	84	260	344	36%	406	42%	212	22%	962	0	21	64	85	± 0	52	± 0	28
2008	898	98	203	301	35%	369	42%	200	23%	870	0	27	55	82	± 0	54	± 0	30
2009	895	81	206	287	33%	421	48%	165	19%	873	0	19	49	68	± 0	39	± 0	23
2010	927	76	218	294	32%	423	46%	193	21%	910	0	18	52	70	± 0	46	± 0	27
2011	887	102	156	258	31%	386	46%	196	23%	840	0	26	40	67	± 2	51	± 1	30
2012	875	73	174	247	29%	429	50%	179	21%	855	0	17	41	58	± 1	42	± 1	26

2012 - 2012 Harvest Age Structure by Hunt Area

for Bison Herd BI101 - JACKSON - Hunt Area ALL

Year	Area	MALES								FEMALES							
		Juv	1	% 1	2+	% 2+	Total Aged	Unk	Total Chkd	Juv	1	% 1	2+	% 2+	Total Aged	Unk	Total Chkd
2012	2	14	0	0%	98	88%	112	0	112	11	0	0%	77	88%	88	0	88

2013 HUNTING SEASONS

SPECIES: BISON

HERD UNIT: JACKSON (BI101)

Hunt Area	Type	Dates of Seasons		Limited Quota	Limitations
		Opens	Closes		
2		Aug. 15	Jan. 12	110	Limited quota, any wild bison
		Aug. 15	Jan. 12	300	Limited quota, any cow/calf wild bison

Summary of Proposed License Changes

Area	Type	Change from 2012
2	1	+6 Days
	4	+ 6 Days

Management Evaluation

Current Management Objective: 500

Management Strategy: Recreational

2012 Postseason Population Estimate: ~875

2013 Proposed Postseason Population Estimate: ~800

The population objective for the Jackson Bison herd is 500 bison. The management strategy is recreational and the objective and management strategy were last revised in 2008.

The current population estimate is approximately 875 bison. Annual harvest rates have stabilized this population.

Herd Unit Issues

Management of this herd is complicated because occupied habitat includes Grand Teton National Park (GTNP), the National Elk Refuge (NER) and the Bridger Teton National Forest (BTNF). Bison remain distributed in GTNP during much of the summer and fall and are not available for hunting until they migrate to either the BTNF or NER. Over the past several years, bison have become sensitized to the presence of hunters on the NER and will vacate the open hunt area. Hunter numbers are limited on the NER in an attempt to provide hunters with a quality hunting experience while moving the population toward the post-hunt objective of 500 bison.

Weather

Weather conditions during 2012 were extremely dry during the late summer and through the hunting season. Drought conditions persisted into early winter; snowpack in the Snake River and Jackson area were reported below normal. At the time of the mid-winter survey, winter precipitation was reported at 87% of normal. Please refer to the following web sites for specific weather station data. <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/temp-and-precip/time-series> and <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/research/prelim/drought/pdiimage.html>

Habitat

No habitat data has been collected on bison summer and winter ranges. There are no established vegetation transects in this herd unit. Please refer to the 2012 Annual Report Strategic Habitat Plan Accomplishments, pages 61-77 for Jackson Region habitat improvement project summaries (<http://wgfd.wyo.gov/web2011/wildlife-1000708.aspx>).

Field Data

During the mid winter trend survey in 2012 a total of 830 bison were classified in the McBride and Poverty Flats areas on the NER and an additional 25 bison were observed on native ranges in Spread Creek for a total of 855 bison counted. Personnel from Grand Teton National Park and the Wyoming Game & Fish Department classified 174 adult males, 73 yearling males, 429 cows and 179 calves. Total herd unit ratios were 58 bulls:100 cows and 42 calves:100 cows. The population is managed to maintain a high bull:cow ratio. Trend data indicate that bison population has stabilized with current harvest levels.

Mandatory harvest reporting is required when a bison is taken by a hunter in Wyoming. During the 2012 season age data were collected on 200 bison.

Harvest Data

Hunter numbers are managed to maintain hunter presence throughout the fall, however, in recent years, fewer Type 4 hunters contacted to participate in the hunt are purchasing licenses. During the 2012 season, a total of 110 hunters on the Any Wild Bison Priority list and 300 hunters on

the Female/Calf Wild Bison Priority list (Type 4 license) were contacted by the Department. Initial hunter notifications are higher than the estimated harvest because not all persons notified purchase licenses to hunt. In 2012, 85% (n=93) of the hunters contacted on the any wild bison priority list purchased a license compared to, 85% (n=102) in 2011, 89 % in 2010 and 91 % in 2009. Forty-nine percent (n=148) of the hunters contacted on the female/calf wild bison priority list purchased a license in 2012 compared to 45 % in 2011, 62 % during the 2010 season and 64 % during 2009.

During the 2012 bison season 265 hunters harvested 98 bull bison, 77 cow bison and 25 calf bison. In 2011, hunters harvested 194 bison and during 2010, hunters harvested 178 bison. In 2012, hunters reported a 75% success rate and spent 10 days/animal harvested. The annual bison harvest must exceed 200 animals to move this population toward its mid-winter objective of 500 bison. Changes proposed for 2013 to increase hunter harvest include improving access along the Gros Ventre River through Grand Teton National Park and implementing periodic hunting season closures on the National Elk Refuge in an effort to allow bison to move south and repopulate the NER without the presence of hunters (Table 1). The bison season will again open on August 15.

Table 1. Proposed hunt periods and closures for the National Elk Refuge during the 2013 bison hunting season.

Hunt Period	Date	Hunt Period	Date
1	August 15 – August 23	Closed	October 21 – November 1
Closed	August 24 – August 30	6	November 2 – November 15
2	August 31- September 6	Closed	November 16 – November 22
Closed	September 7 – September 13	7	November 23 – December 1
3	September 14- September 20	Closed	December 2 – December 6
Closed	September 21-September 27	8	December 7 – December 13
4	September 28-October 4	9	December 14 – December 20
Closed	October 5 –October 11	9	December 21 – December 27
5	October 12 – October 20	10	December 28 – January 3
		11	January 4 – January 12

Population

The 2012 mid winter trend count indicates that this population remained relatively stable since trending downward following the initiation of hunting on the NER in 2007. The bison population peaked at 1100 animals 2007. Harvest levels need to exceed 200 bison in order to move this population toward the post-season objective of 500 animals.

Management Summary

Proposed hunting season quotas for female/calf wild bison are the same as 2012 levels. Quota changes are not recommended due to hunter density concerns on the NER. The periodic closures should help bison redistribute and move further onto the NER. Hunter access will be allowed along the Gros Ventre River from U.S. Highway 191 and along the Kelly Road in Grand Teton National Park. Trend data and harvest levels indicate that a reduction of the population was achieved during years when harvest levels exceed 200 animals. Nearly all bison migrate to the National Elk Refuge and each year a high percentage of the population is counted and most cow/calf groups are fed on the National Elk Refuge. Since 2007, an average of 190

calves were counted indicating that harvest levels must exceed this count in order to move this population toward objective. Changes are proposed this year to help facilitate hunter access and closures are proposed to allow bison to move well into the hunt area before being displaced back north in Grand Teton National Park.

